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PATENT

S.N. 10/642,539

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-13, 15-17, and 19-22 are in the current application.

Claims 1, 10, and 17 are amended to place the claims in condition for issuance as indicated in the Allowable Subject Matter section below.

Claims 2-4, 6-9, 11-12, 15, and 19-20 are amended to provide proper antecedent basis with the corresponding independent claims.

Claims 5, 14, and 18 are cancelled.

New dependent claims 21 and 22 are added.

Allowable Subject Matter:

The Office Action states that claims 5-9, 13-16, and 18-20 were objected to as being depend upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

By this amendment, claim 1 is amended to include the limitations of prior claim 5. It is believed that this amendment to claim 1 places claim 1 in condition for allowance by incorporating the limitations of claim 5 as stated in the Office Action.

By this amendment, claim 10 is amended to include the limitations of prior claim 14. It is believed that this amendment to claim 10 places claim 10 in condition for allowance by incorporating the limitations of claim 14 as stated in the Office Action.

By this amendment, claim 17 is amended to include the limitations of prior claim 18. It is believed that this amendment to claim 17 places claim 17 in condition for allowance by incorporating the limitations of claim 18 as stated in the Office Action.

35 USC 102 Rejection:

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Claims 1-4, 10-12, and 17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 over U.S. patent no. 6,404,295 issued to Minami et al. It is believed that this rejection is overcome by the amendments to the claims.

As stated hereinbefore, claim 1 is amended to place claim 1 in condition for allowance as indicated in the Office Action.

Claims 2-4 and 6-9 depend from now allowable claim 1 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

As stated hereinbefore, claim 10 is amended to place claim 10 in condition for allowance as indicated in the Office Action.

Claims 11-13 and 15-16 depend from now allowable claim 10 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

Claim 17 is also amended to place claim 10 in condition for allowance as indicated hereinbefore.

Claims 19 and 20 are amended to depend from now allowable claim 17 and are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 17.

New claim 21 depends from now allowable claim 1 and is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

New claim 22 depends from now allowable claim 10 and is believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 10.

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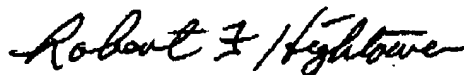
CONCLUSION

Applicant(s) made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. In view of all of the above, it is believed that the claims are allowable, and that the case is now in condition for allowance, which action is earnestly solicited.

By this amendment, three dependent claims were cancelled and two dependent claims were added, thus, it is believed that no fees are due for this amendment. However, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees that may be required or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account 50-1086.

If there are matters which can be discussed by telephone to further the prosecution of this Application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney/agent at the Examiner's convenience.

Respectfully submitted,
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